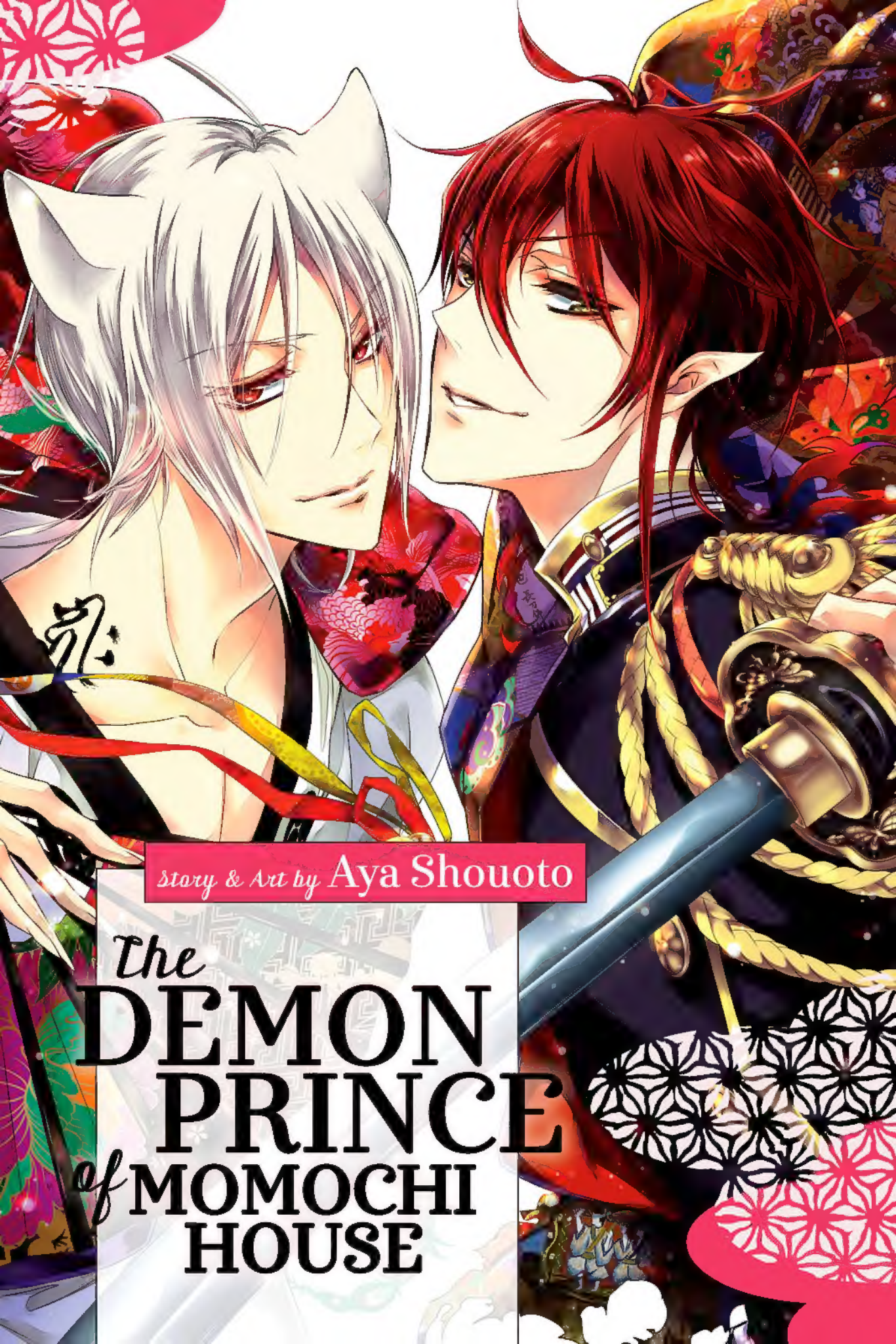
The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

9

Story & Art by
Aya Shouoto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CHAPTER 32

Wish

Wish
CHAPTER
32

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The Mysterious Residents of Momochi House

Aoi Nanamori

When he was 7 years old, he wandered into Momochi House and was chosen as the Omamori-sama. He transforms into a nue to perform his duties, but it seems this role was meant for Himari.

Omamori-sama (Nue)

An ayakashi, or demon, with the ears of a cat, the wings of a bird, and the tail of a fox. As the Omamori-sama, the nue protects Momochi House and eliminates demons who make their way in from the spiritual realm.

Yukari

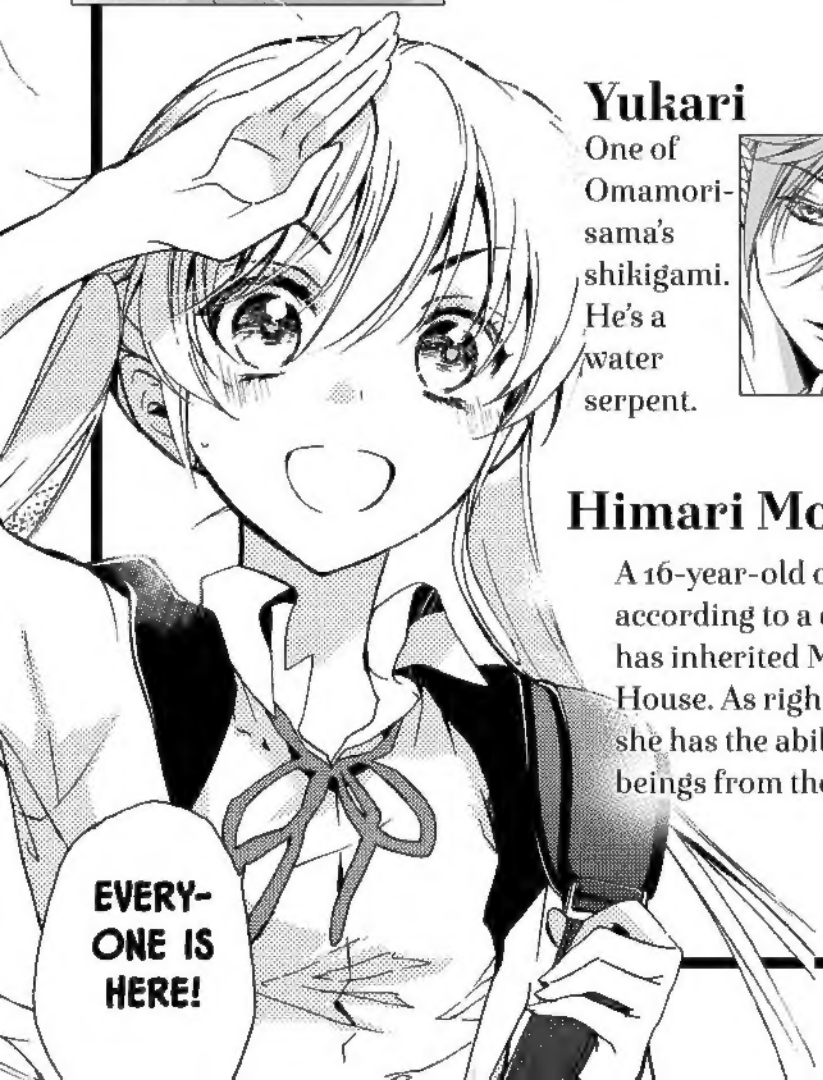
One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's a water serpent.

Ise

One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's an orangutan.

Himari Momochi

A 16-year-old orphan who, according to a certain will, has inherited Momochi House. As rightful owner, she has the ability to expel beings from the house.

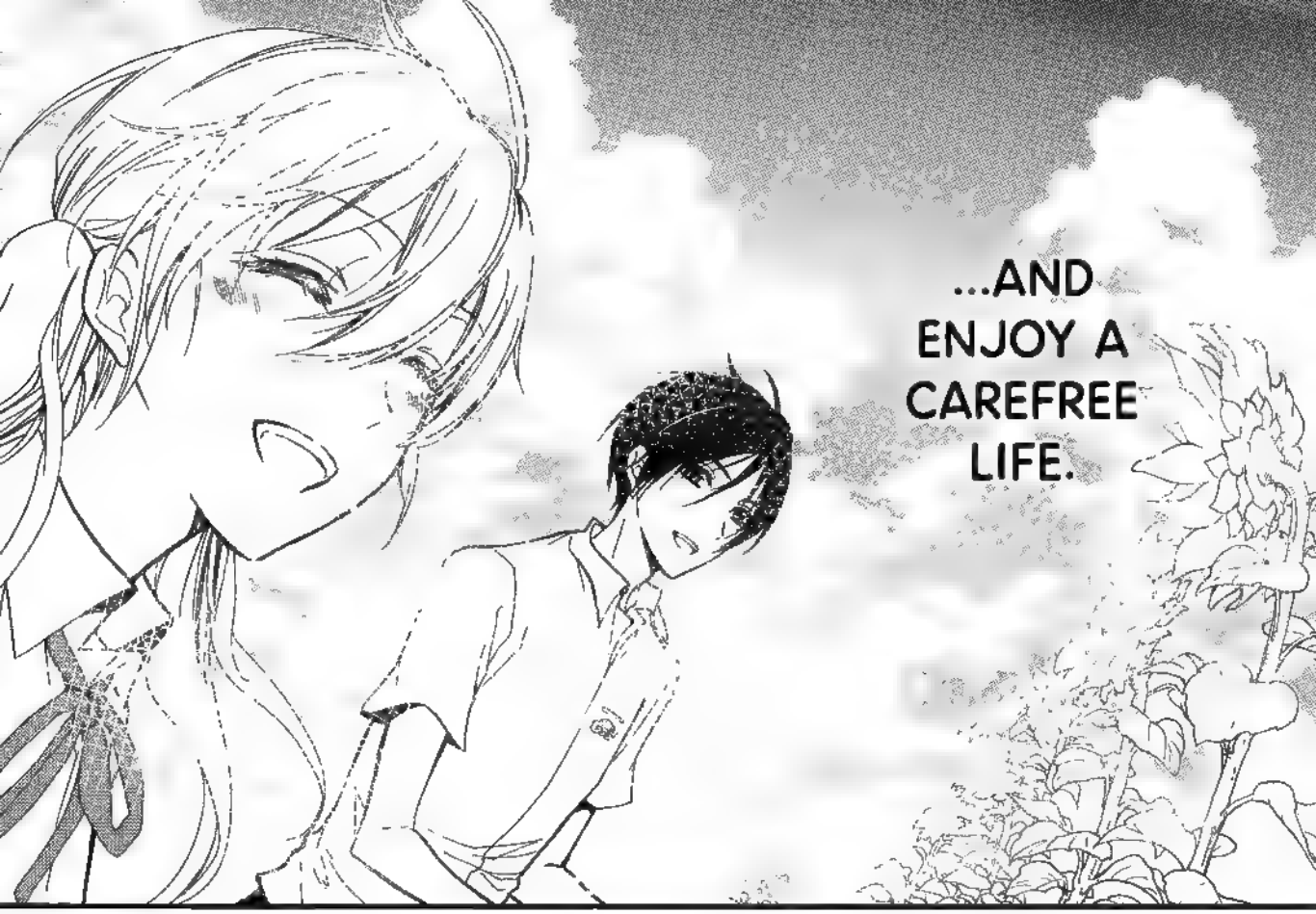


Lesser Yokai

Momochi House: Story Thus Far

Aoi has become stuck as the Nue and is unable to revert to human form. Himari must retrieve Aoi's memories so he can transform back. She visits the Nanamori household with Ise to find out more about what happened to Aoi in his childhood. But as she had expected, his family has no recollection of him. Furthermore, for reasons unknown, Aoi's younger sister Akane is an ayakashi. Unsure what to do, Himari is shown the path to truth by the winter cherry lantern and arrives at the Drawers of Thought, the storehouse of all memories. There she gives up learning about her true name and past in order to gain access to Aoi's memories. Aoi's feelings of guilt for allowing an ayakashi into the Nanamori household and bringing misfortune on his family are impeding him from reverting back to human form. The Nue tells Himari that ayakashi and humans cannot coexist. Concerned about Akane's letter, Himari returns to the Nanamori household...

I SOMETIMES WISH...
IF ONLY AOI COULD LEAVE MOMOCHI HOUSE, THEN...
IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.
I KNOW THAT.
BUT EVEN SO...
I THOUGHT IF WE REALLY TRIED, THERE WOULD BE SOME WAY...
...AND THEN...
...WE COULD BE NORMAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.
WE COULD LEAVE EVERYTHING BEHIND US...



CAN THINGS TRULY WORK OUT?

...A WHISPER!...

AYAKASHI AND HUMANS CANNOT...

UNLIKE THE NAME YOU BEAR, YOU ARE POWER-LESS.

I HEAR...

SHAAA

BUT LITTLE BY LITTLE...

AOI IS DEAD.

THAT WHICH...

...FACE THIS WITH OPEN EYES?

CAN I STILL...

...CAN'T BE OVERCOME BY WISHFUL THINKING?

THIS PLACE...
YOU'RE FINALLY HERE, HUH.
ISE?
DON'T LET DOWN YOUR GUARD. THIS AREA IS WITHIN THE SPIRITUAL REALM.
OH NO! IT LOOKS LIKE I'VE BEEN SEPARATED FROM MR. NANAMORI. .
!
OF COURSE.
NO NORMAL HUMAN COULD GET THIS FAR INTO THIS REALM
UNLESS THEY'VE BEEN SUMMONED.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

HIMARI!
OH!
THUK
SO YOU FINALLY CAME OUT...
...AKANE.

DIS...
KRK
KRIK
KRIK
WHOOM
DISAP-PEAR!
HAH... YOU'RE NOT AS POWER-FUL...
...AS I THOUGHT.
R
H
H I M

DISAP-PEAR.
DISAP-PEAR.
DISAP-PEAR.
DISAP-PEAR.
I CAN TAKE YOU ON BY MYSELF.
THIS TIME, I'LL FINISH—
DON'T ATTACK!
EVEN SO...
SHE TRIED TO DEVOUR YOU!
SHE'S AN AYAKASHI!
WHAT?!

AYAKASHI AND HUMANS CAN'T-
EVEN SO, YOU CAN'T!
THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?!
Aoi is dead.
...AOI IS DEAD...
...SO YOU WOULDN'T TELL.
DISAP-PEAR.
I TOLD YOU...
KLENCH
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

AOI WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A SECRET...
SO YOU WOULDN'T TELL.
HIMARI?
DASH
YOU DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO KNOW, DID YOU?
AKANE!
STOP SAYING "AOI"!
...THAT IMPORTANT TO HER.
I'M SORRY.
IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
IT WAS...

DON'T EAT HER!

"AOI"? WHAT IS SHE TALKING ABOUT?
HIMARI?
GWAR
STOP ...
...TALKING ABOUT AOI!

WAFT
HALT
TWINS...

AKANE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE A TWIN SISTER.
BUT...
...ONE TWIN SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED WHILE MY WIFE WAS STILL PREGNANT.
WE KNEW SHE EXISTED FROM THE ULTRA-SOUND...
...BUT SHE WAS NEVER BORN.
THE NAME...
...WAS "AOI."
...WE HAD PLANNED TO GIVE HER...

...
...IS AN AYAKASHI, ISN'T SHE?
YOUR "AOI"...
BUT...
...THIS GIRL TOLD ME YOU WOULD BE ALL RIGHT!
AKANE! I...MUST DEVOUR HER!
GRIP
I CAN'T ALLOW IT!
I'M AN AYA-KASH!
THAT ONE WILL EXTERMINATE ME!

...
ISE...
SHE'S AFRAID OF YOU?
THEN...
YOU'RE THE ONE FROM BACK THEN.
YOU'RE THAT BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MAN MR. NANAMORI WAS TALKING ABOUT.
VEEN
HUH?! WHAT'S WITH THAT LOOK?
HE CAME HERE...
...AND EXTERMI-NATED THE AYAKASHI IN THE HOUSE!

I GOT RID OF MOST OF THE AYAKASHI IN THE NANAMORI HOUSEHOLD...
AOI ASKED ME TO.
...
...BUT HE TOLD ME NOT TO LAY A HAND ON HIS "SISTER."
SHE HAD BEEN A WEAK AYAKASHI.
SHE WAS PROBABLY DRAWN TO AOI, BUT COULDN'T DO ANYTHING TO HIM BECAUSE OF HIS POWER.
OUT OF FEAR, SHE HID IN HIS MOTHER'S WOMB...
...AND ATTACHED HERSELF TO HIS BABY SISTER.
DISAP-
FEAR

AS YOU CAN SEE, THEY'VE FUSED TOGETHER.
ALL THIS TIME I TOO BELIEVED WHAT AOI HAD TOLD ME...
...THAT HIS SISTER WAS AN AYAKASHI.
BUT NOW THAT I KNOW THE TRUTH...
...AS HIS SHIKIGAMI, I CANNOT IGNORE THIS.
SHAA
THAT AYAKASHI MUST BE GOTTEN RID OF.
ISE?!
IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, SHE MIGHT TRY TO DEVOUR SOMEONE ELSE.

...WHY DON'T WE TAKE THIS AOI TO MOMOCHI HOUSE JUST LIKE WE DID WITH THE FOX SPIRIT?!
OKAY. SO THEN...
AOI!
I KNEW IT. HE'S...
RHHM
THAT'S IMPOS-SIBLE.
SHE'S WEAK.
IF WE SEPARATE THEM, THAT AYAKASHI WILL DISAPPEAR.
SHE'S LIKE A SHADOW.
BUT-
DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND?

AOI'S WISH...
...IS TO PROTECT HIS FAMILY.
SHAAA
HUMANS AND AYAKASHI CAN'T-
SWIP
STOP!

I WON'T LET YOU HURT AOI!
I KNOW WHY.
BUT WHEN EVENING COMES, THEY'RE SAD.
MOMMY AND DADDY ARE BOTH KIND.
IT'S BECAUSE ...
...SOMEONE WENT MISSING.
WHO ARE YOU?
VHHM

...AREN'T YOU?
YOU'RE AOI...
AOI IS MY SISTER!
WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER ALL THIS TIME.
I SEE.
I CARE ABOUT HER!

SO...
...DON'T TAKE AOI AWAY!
IF SHE'S BEING A BAD GIRL, I'LL STOP HER.
EVERY SINGLE TIME!
EVERY SINGLE TIME!
PLEASE!
YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF AYAKASHI, ARE YOU, AKANE?
SHFF

WHAT ABOUT YOU, AOI?
WHY WOULD I BE? SHE'S MY FAMILY.
I...
JOLT
...WHO'S SUPPOSED TO BE IN THIS FAMILY...
THAT BOY IS THE ONE...
I WANT TO...
...BE WITH AKANE...
STILL...

I'M SORRY.
I APOLOGIZE TO THAT BOY.
I WANT TO BE WITH HER.
I WANT TO BE WITH THIS GIRL.
IF ANYTHING HAPPENS...
...I'LL TRY TO STOP HER TOO.

...THAT HUMANS AND AYAKASHI CAN LIVE TOGETHER.
MY WISH...
I WANT TO BELIEVE...
DON'T JUST DECIDE THINGS ON YOUR OWN!
HUH?!
ALONG WITH THIS BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MAN.
...IS THAT WE CAN BECOME A FAMILY.
YOU FEEL THE SAME, RIGHT?

I'VE WISHED FOR IT MANY TIMES LIKE YOU.
WISHING ISN'T ENOUGH TO MAKE SOMETHING COME TRUE...
THE NEXT TIME YOU GO WILD, I WON'T GO SO EASY ON YOU.
...
GEH!
...BUT IF I DON'T WISH FOR IT, I'M SURE NOTHING WILL CHANGE.

HOW BORING.

KASHA.
I KEEP TELLING YOU THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU.
NUE...
I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU LOSE CONTROL.
THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME.
LET'S SEE...
I'LL HELP MOVE THINGS FORWARD A BIT.

GRIN
IT'S NOTH-ING MUCH
THIS REALM IS IN THE PALM OF MY HAND
KASHA, WHAT ARE YOU-

SWOOSH
HUH?
WHY...
KLAP
WHAM
KASHA!
KLAP
KLAP
KLAP
...ARE YOU HERE?

AH, SO YOU DECIDED TO COME, NUE.

I WAS RUNNING OUT OF PATIENCE. YOU'RE NOT ENTERTAINING ME.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, GIRL?
AOI STILL CAN'T REVERT BACK TO HUMAN FORM.
YOU'RE USELESS.
SHUT UP!
SHE'S TAKEN HUGE RISKS TO HELP HIM!
OH?
THEN DO YOU TRULY THINK...

THAT...
...HUMANS AND AYAKASHI CAN COEXIST?
I'M NOT BOTHERED BY THE WORDS OF A DEMON LIKE YOU.
...IS MY WISH.

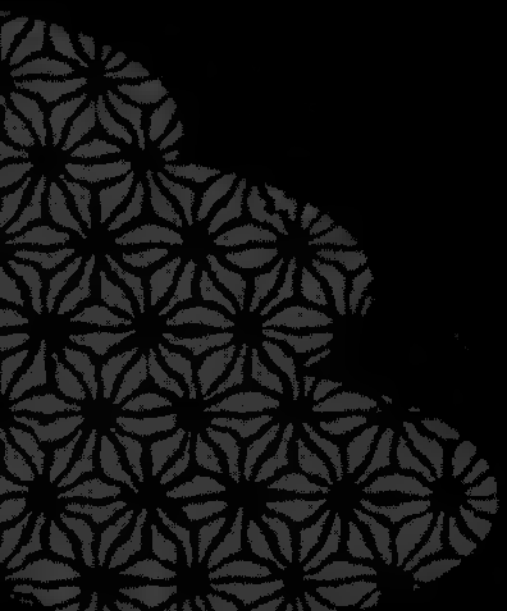
...IS CHAOS.
I KNOW.
I REMEMBER THE TERMS OF OUR BET.
IF YOU LAY A HAND ON HIMARI-
KASHA.
AND WHAT...
...WE DEMONS LOVE...
...SNIFF OUT SUFFERING.
OGRES...
...LOVE CORRUPTION.
EVIL SPIRITS...
LISTEN CLOSELY, GIRL.
POI

I'M AFTER THIS ONE.
NO!

I WANT TO BE WITH THIS GIRL...

AYAKASHI HAVE NO NEED FOR WISHES.

Chapter 32 End



The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER
33

The Seventh Child

AYAKASHI HAVE NO NEED FOR WISHES.

...TO DO AS THEY PLEASE.

AYAKASHI SIMPLY EXIST...

I DON'T KNOW.

I DON'T KNOW, BUT...

AKANE, DON'T CRY...

I WANT TO BE WITH THIS GIRL.

I SEE.

IT'S BECAUSE I'M AN AYAKASHI...

...SO I'LL DO AS I PLEASE AND STAY WITH YOU.

ALWAYS...

ALWAYS...

KASHA!

OH?
WHAT'S THIS?

DESPITE YOUR WEAK BONDS...
...DO YOU HAVE FEELINGS FOR THOSE WHO SHARE YOUR BLOOD?
...IS FATED TO HAVE WEAK BONDS WITH HIS BLOOD RELATIVES.
HE...
OR...
KRSH
KRSH

...IS IT JUST AN ACT?
YOU PUT ON A FINE SHOW OF PRETENDING TO BE HUMAN.
HA HA HA HA

DASH
KASHA!
NO MATTER WHAT YOU SAY...
...AOI IS HUMAN!
KLAT
SHEE
HE HAS WEAK BONDS.
SO WHAT?
WE WILL BECOME HIS TIES.

BEGONE.
...KASHA.
PLAYTIME IS OVER...

I'LL...

...SEE YOU AGAIN.

NO NEED TO GET SO ANGRY.

HEH

VHHM

WELL.

I'M SATISFIED.

THIRK

BOOM

Haaa

I'LL...
...SEE YOU AGAIN.
NO NEED TO GET SO ANGRY.
HEH
VHHM
WELL.
I'M SATISFIED.
THIRK

WHO ARE YOU?

WHERE DID AOI GO?
ARE YOU AN AYAKASHI?
ARE YOU THE SAME AS AOI?
SUFF

GLOW
IS THAT...
...AOI?!

IT'S AN ORDINARY LIGHT.
I'M...
...TAKING THIS BACK TO THE AYAKASHI WORLD.
SHFF

DOES THIS MEAN I CAN'T SEE AOI ANYMORE?!
THAT'S RIGHT.
...
BUT...
...YOU'RE SISTERS, AREN'T YOU?

EVEN IF YOU'RE APART...
...YOUR HEARTS WILL BE TOGETHER.
YES...
SHE'LL ALWAYS BE DEAR TO ME!
EVEN IF WE DON'T SEE EACH OTHER...
...WE'LL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER...

THANK YOU...
... AYAKASHI!
HUH ?!
AKANE!
SNIFF
YOU'RE...

AOI'S— AKANE'S FATHER!
THANK GOOD-NESS.
Hug
I'M SO RELIEVED YOU'RE SAFE, AKANE!
WE'RE STILL IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM.
I'M AMAZED HE COULD GET IN.
OH!

I KNEW IT WAS YOU.
...
THANKS TO YOU, OUR LIVES WERE SAVED. I'M GRATEFUL FOR THAT.
BUT PLEASE...
SWIP
PLEASE DON'T TAKE HER AWAY!
...

TMP
NUE...
I'LL DO ANYTHING. I'LL GIVE UP MY LIFE. PLEASE...
...DON'T DO WHAT YOU DID TO HER TWIN SISTER AOI.
...
I HAVE NO NEED FOR ANYTHING FROM YOU.
THAT'S YOUR FATHER.
?
THEN ...
I CAN'T LET HIM SEE ME LIKE THIS.

AKANE?
OH
AOI WENT AWAY.
DADDY...
I HEARD YOU AND MOMMY TALKING.
YEAH.
...ABOUT AOI?
YOU KNEW...
...
I SEE.
...WE PLANNED ON GIVING YOUR SISTER.
AOI IS THE NAME THAT...
I WONDER WHY...

...FOR SOME REASON...
...WHEN-EVER I SEE THE SUNSET...
...THAT NAME LINGERS IN MY MIND.

AOI...

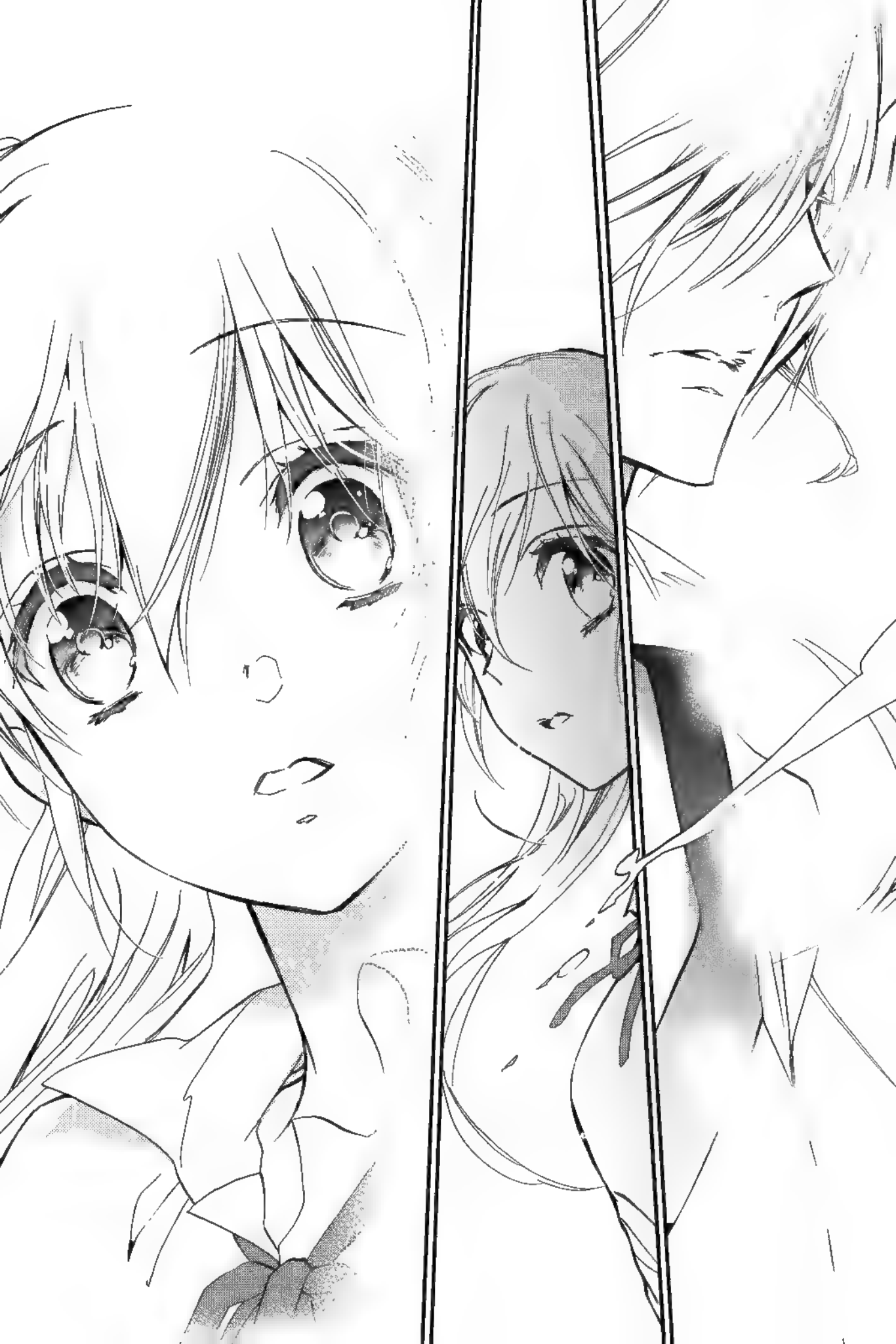
I WONDER...
I WONDER WHY THAT IS...

BACK THEN...
I TOLD YOU I'D TAKE WHAT YOU HAD LOST.
DADDY...
WHAT'S WRONG?
ISE...

COULD YOU RUN AN ERRAND FOR ME?
I WANT YOU TO VISIT MY HOUSE.
MAKE SURE MY FAMILY ISN'T WORRYING ABOUT ME.
I GUESSED WHAT MOMOCHI HOUSE'S POWERS HAD DONE...
...BUT WHEN I SAW THAT THEY HAD SIMPLY FORGOTTEN EVERY-THING...

...THAT IT WASN'T IMPORTANT.
I THOUGHT...
...THIS WAS SOMETHING YOU WERE FINE WITH LOSING...

BUT...
...IT WASN'T...
...SOME-THING...
...YOU WANTED TO LOSE.



AOI.

AOI.

...TO ACCEPT
HIS PAST IN
HIS HEART.

GRAB
AOI!
YOU CAN SEE YOUR DAD NOW!
RIGHT NOW!
AT THIS MOMENT...
...IN THIS PLACE...
...EVEN IF IT'S JUST A GLIMPSE...

IT'S OKAY.
HUG
IT'S OKAY, HIMARI.

THANK YOU.
AOI...

WELCOME BACK.
DADDY...
AOI HAS GONE AWAY.
BUT...

...EVEN IF WE'RE APART...
...WE'LL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER.
...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
BECAUSE WE'RE FAMILY.

LET'S
GO
HOME.

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER
34

Welcome Back to Momochi House!

CHAPTER 34

Welcome Back to Momochi House!

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

KRI...
KRI...
SO DID YOU GO TO THE NANAMORI HOUSE IN THE NEXT TOWN?
HIMARI?
YES, I DID.
THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL NAMED AKANE. SHE REALLY ENJOYED THE CANDY.
I SEE. THANKS FOR DOING THAT FOR ME.
NO PROB-LEM.
SO...
WAS IT THE HOUSE YOU WERE LOOKING FOR—THE ONE BELONGING TO YOUR FRIEND?

...EVERY-THING'S SETTLED NOW.
I THINK ...
...BELONGED TO AOI'S FAMILY.
EVERY-THING ...
...IS SET-TLED?
THAT HOUSE WAS AOI'S PAST.
AOI'S PATH HOME.
YES.
WE JUST DISCOVERED IT. NOW...
THAT HOUSE...

NO ONE HAS REGAINED THEIR MEMORIES OF AOI, BUT...
I SEE.
OH, YOU ALL HELPED ME OUT A LOT...
THANK YOU!
NO PROB-LEM.
POFF
AS LONG AS YOU'RE OKAY WITH THAT.
THAT'S RIGHT!

THERE'S A LOCAL FESTIVAL TONIGHT. WANT TO GO WITH US?
BY THE WAY, HIMARI...
GLOM
I'D LIKE THAT.
A FESTI-VAL...
BUT...
...I'VE GOT SOME THINGS TO DO TONIGHT.
I'M HOME.
PASH
HUH?

SWF
SWIP
AH...
WELCOME HOME!

BY RESTORING THE "PATH HOME" IN HIS HEART...
...AOI CAME BACK.
AOI!
BLUSH
YUP
SORRY, SORRY.
WERE YOU HIDING?!

I'M SO HAPPY ABOUT THAT.
HM?
DO I HAVE SOME-THING ON MY FACE?
NO!
KRIII
AH, IT'S SO HOT OUT...
KRIII
KRIII
SHALL WE GO INSIDE?
BY THE WAY, AOI...
SWFF
AREN'T YOU TIRED? IT'S SCORCHING OUT.
DON'T YOU FEEL LIKE TAKING A NAP?
HUH?
WHAT?
I'M NOT TIRED.
WELL, YOU LOOK SLEEPY.
HUH? REALLY?
WELL, IF YOU SAY SO...
...I'LL SLEEP BY YOUR SIDE.
KRIII
KRIII
SLAP
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!
KRIII
HUH? THEN WHAT?!

ASTIR
HURRY, WHILE WE HAVE THIS CHANCE!
WE HAVE ONLY UNTIL NIGHTFALL!
TUMP TUMP
THAT GOES OVER THERE.
HELP ME WITH THIS!
WHY IS EVERYONE SCRAMBLING ABOUT?
ISE!
PERFECT TIMING. I WANT YOU TO HELP OUT!
HUH?
Welcome Back, Aoi!
I'M PREPARING...
...A SURPRISE PARTY FOR AOI.
A PARTY! A PARTY!
IT'S A PARTY!

"WELCOME BACK"? IT'S NOT AS IF HE WENT ANYWHERE.
SIGH
THAT'S TRUE.
BUT HE SPENT THE ENTIRE TIME AS THE NUE IN A DARK SITTING ROOM.
MAYBE HE'D LIKE TO HAVE SOME FUN.
GRIN GRIN
LO
OMY
WE'RE GETTING THINGS SET UP WHILE AOI IS TAKING A NAP!
RIGHT, TAMAMO ?!
YEAH!
I PUT HIM TO SLEEP IN A SINGLE BLOW.
Leave it to me!
SHLP

WHOA, I HAD A TERRIFYING THOUGHT THERE.
IT'S JUST YOUR IMAGINATION.
YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD BOY, TAMAMO.
NOW COME ON, LET'S GET THINGS READY.

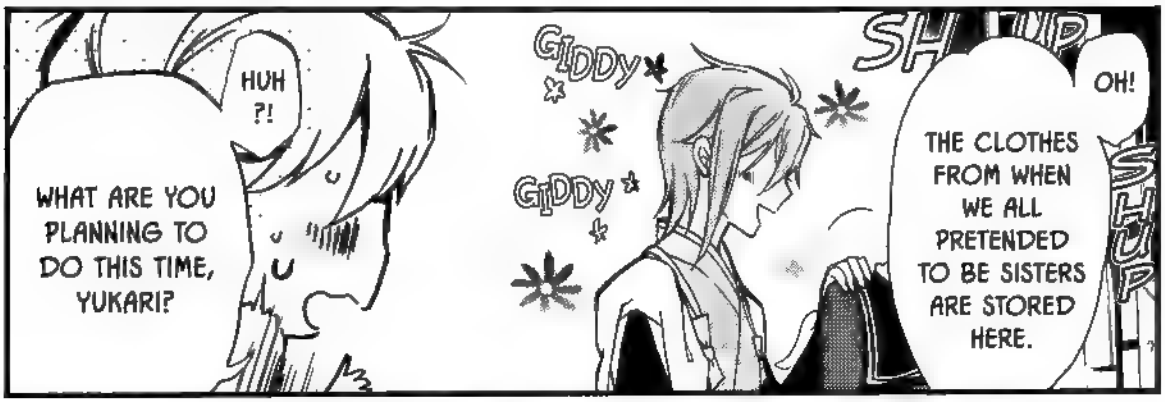
HIMARI! I GOT THESE FOR YOU!
TMP TMP
From a certain gay flower!
WOW, SO MANY SUN-FLOWERS. LET'S STRING THEM TOGETHER.
It doesn't reach ?
Whoa!
Hold up that side!
SKUPRRY
SKUPRRY
...
PHUK

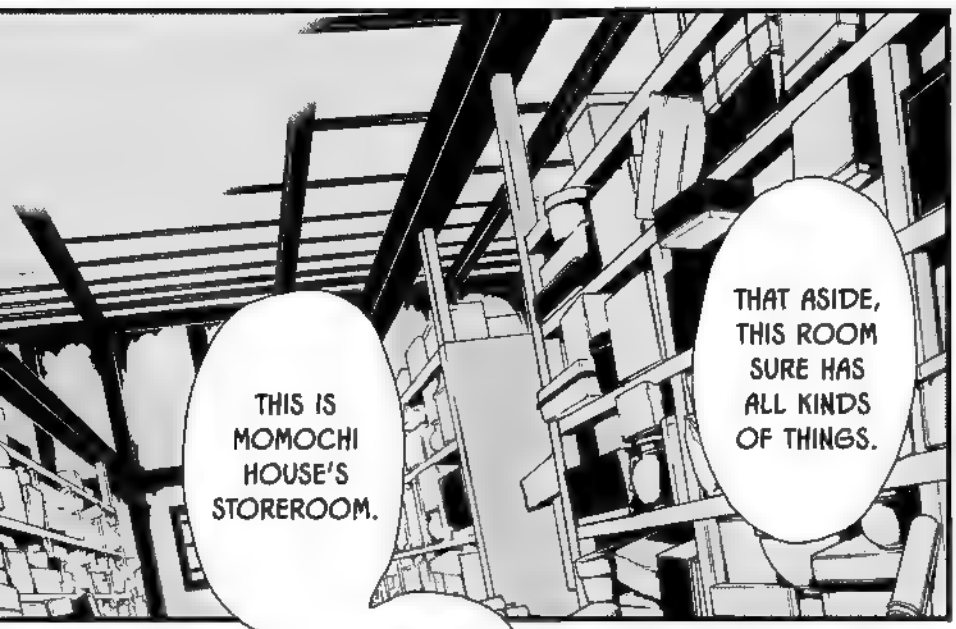
PLOP
ISE!
UP HERE?
THANKS.
HONESTLY, YOU'RE SO STUPIDLY ENERGETIC...
...HIMARI.
That looks good on you.
BUT...
FWISH
"STUPIDLY" IS GOING A BIT TOO FAR!

EVER SINCE I WAS LITTLE...
...I'VE ALWAYS ...
...WANTED TO BE LIKE THIS FLOWER.
CHEERFUL LIKE A SUN-FLOWER.
A FLOWER THAT FACES THE SUN...
I WONDER IF MY PARENTS BASED MY NAME...
...ON *HIMAWARI*, THE JAPANESE WORD FOR SUNFLOWER.
BEFORE I CAME TO MOMOCHI HOUSE...
...THE ONLY THING MY PARENTS LEFT ME WAS MY NAME.
HMM ...
You're doing it again!
I TOLD YOU, "STUPIDLY" IS GOING A BIT TOO FAR!
I THINK IT'S PRETTY FITTING SINCE YOU'RE SO STUPIDLY ENERGETIC.

...THE TRUE NAME YOUR PARENTS GAVE YOU.
BUT...
THE HI IN MY NAME MEANS "LIGHT."
THAT STRANGE GUARDIAN TOLD ME.
OH
It wouldn't?
I THOUGHT I COULD FIND SOMETHING IN THIS STORE-ROOM...
...THAT WOULD BE PERFECT FOR THIS "SURPRISE PARTY."
PERHAPS I SHOULD TRY TO BE A BIT MORE SEDATE...
THAT WON'T WORK...
Hmmm
KLUTT
KLUTT
SOMETHING THAT WILL STAND OUT...
Ah. That's what he meant.
WELL, IT IS SHORT NOTICE...

YOU MIGHT SUMMON SOMETHING...
.with that many candles.
Shall I light a hundred?
WE HAVE A LOT OF CANDLES.
SHUP


HUH ?!
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO THIS TIME, YUKARI?
GIDDY
GIDDY
OH!
THE CLOTHES FROM WHEN WE ALL PRETENDED TO BE SISTERS ARE STORED HERE.
SHUP
SHUP


THIS IS MOMOCHI HOUSE'S STOREROOM.
THAT ASIDE, THIS ROOM SURE HAS ALL KINDS OF THINGS.

THERE ARE DUBIOUS ITEMS OF AYAKASHI ORIGIN EVERYWHERE.
Be careful.

I WANT TO DO SOME-THING ...
...TO SURPRISE AOI.
THUP
THUP
YOU'RE REALLY DETER-MINED, HUH.
Thanks.
SHUP

IT REMINDS ME OF THAT PLACE.
...I DON'T DISLIKE THE SMELL OF OLD THINGS.
STILL...
SNIP
AND...
AOI'S SIBLINGS...
THE DRAWERS OF THOUGHT...
IT HAPPENED RECENTLY, SO WHY DOES IT FEEL SO LONG AGO?
YUKARI...
COME TO THINK OF IT...
AOI TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU IN THE DRAWERS OF THOUGHT.

YOU MUST HAVE WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR PARENTS.
...THAT MEANT YOU COULDN'T OPEN YOUR OWN DRAWER
BUT...
BECAUSE OF THAT, AOI WAS ABLE TO COME BACK.
YOU CHOSE AOI'S DRAWER.
I HAVE NO REGRETS.
IT'S OKAY
HMM
HIMARI.

I'M SURE IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO KNOW.
THERE'S SOME-THING...
...AOI HAS BEEN DEBATING WHETHER TO TELL YOU.
LONG AGO, AOI HAPPENED TO FIND...
...A DIARY WRITTEN BY ONE OF YOUR PARENTS.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR MORE?

AOI FOUND IT A FEW YEARS AFTER HE WAS FIRST TRAPPED...
...IN MOMOCHI HOUSE.
AT THAT TIME, MOMOCHI HOUSE WAS WITHOUT A LANDLORD AND HAD ACCUMULATED MANY IMPURITIES...
...WHICH ALLOWED EVIL SPIRITS TO RUN RAMPANT.
AOI WOULD SPEND EVERY WAKING HOUR TRYING TO BANISH THEM.

HE DIDN'T KNOW WHY...
...BUT HE WAS CHOSEN TO BE THE VESSEL FOR THE NUE.
...WILL EVERYONE BE SAVED?
IF I CHASE OUT THE BAD AYAKASHI...
YUKARI ...
HUFF
I MEAN, AOI.
SPLENDID WORK, OMAMORI-SAMA.
HIS VOICE SOUNDS SO FAINT...
...ARE SAFE BECAUSE OF YOU.
YES. THE HUMANS IN THIS REGION...
I SEE.
MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY WILL BE SAFE.
AND ...
...THERE IS NO STRENGTH LEFT IN HIS EYES.

WILL I HAVE TO...
...DO THIS FOREVER?
I WISH I COULD...
...BECOME A TRUE AYAKASHI...
...
THEN ONE DAY...
KLAK
...WITHOUT SENSE OF GOOD AND EVIL.

FLIP
FMP
WHAT IS THIS BOOK?
IT'S GLOWING?
FLIP
IT'S A DIARY.
THE DIARY HAD BEEN BADLY DAMAGED. THERE WERE BLACK STAINS...
...AND FEW PORTIONS OF IT WERE LEGIBLE.

I was born w
but I don't
have much power
doesn't
can fulfill my duty to Momochi Ho
wha
will happen to Omamori-sa
THIS DIARY BELONGS TO SOMEONE FROM MOMOCHI HOUSE.
OH
HE STARTED PICKING OUT THE WORDS...
THIS HOUSE...
THE DIARY BELONGED TO A WOMAN WITH THE MOMOCHI NAME.
FLUP
SHE WAS LIVING A QUIET LIFE IN A TOWN AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN...
...WHEN SHE FELL IN LOVE WITH A MAN WHO MARRIED HER DESPITE KNOWING HER SITUATION.
FLUP
A DAUGHTER WAS BORN...
HE READ FRAGMENTS ABOUT THEIR HAPPY LIFE.
FLUP
UNTIL HALFWAY THROUGH...
FLUP

FLUP
THE BLACK STAINS GOT LARGER...
...AND A SHADOW BEGAN TO SPREAD OVER THE LIFE IN THAT DIARY
AOI LEARNED THAT THE WOMAN WAS AFRAID OF SOMETHING.
FLUP
FLUP
I must return home.
As expected, I cannot escape.
is coming.
FLUP
FLUP
FLUP
There's no time.
There's something outside.
I must do something. Or else
OH
FLUP
I no longer

TH
O
O
M
EVENTU-
ALLY...
...HE CAME
TO PAGES
THAT HAD
ROTTED
AWAY.
AH!
HHM
AOI!
YUKARI.
ARE
YOU
ALL
RIGHT?
IT SEEMS
THERE WAS
SOMETHING
PRETTY
NASTY
INHABITING
THAT
DIARY.
THE
DIARY...
THSSH

WE PROBABLY DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME ..
THE MOMOCHI NAME WAS TOO MUCH OF A BURDEN FOR ME
THIS IS FATE ..
BUT DESPITE MY SHORT LIFE, I WAS HAPPY..
FOOM
?!
TWO?
SHOOF
THOSE SPIRITS...
...ARE MOST LIKELY THE OWNER OF THE DIARY AND HER HUSBAND.

THESE TWO...
...PASSED AWAY.
THEY POURED WHAT LITTLE POWER THEY HAD INTO THIS DIARY.
IF YOU ARE READ-ING THIS DIARY...
...ARE YOU OUR DAUGHTER OR SOME-ONE ELSE?
THOSE OF MOMOCHI BLOOD WHO ARE WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT POWER AREN'T CHOSEN TO BE THE NUE'S VESSEL.
THEY FALL PREY TO THE IMPURITIES THAT ACCUMULATE IN THIS HOUSE.
THOSE TWO COULDN'T ESCAPE.
WE HOPE OUR DAUGHTER WILL COME TO THIS HOUSE ONE DAY...
...AND BRING STABILITY.
PLEASE TELL HER...

...WE
LOVE
HER.
SOOF

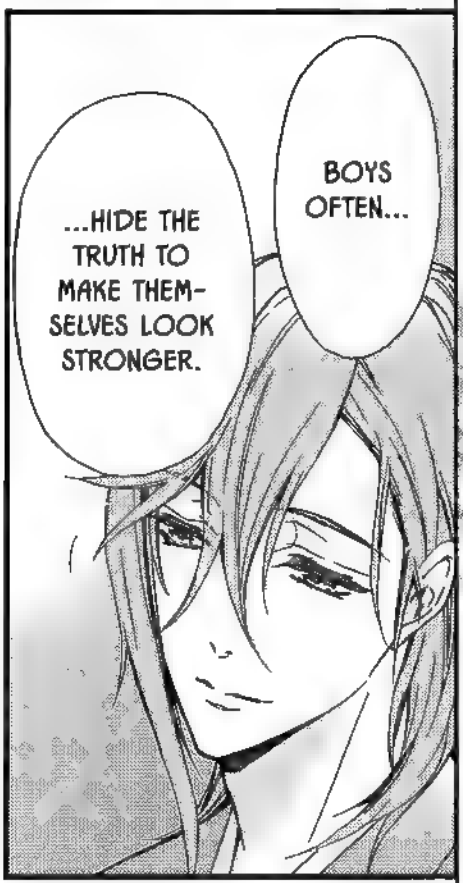
BUT...
I SEE.
THEN...
...AOI MUST BEAR THIS BURDEN.
BECAUSE OF HIS OTHER-WORLDLY POWER...
...TO BE THE NUE NOW.
YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN BY THIS HOUSE...
...WILL SHE END UP LIKE THEM?
IF SHE DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH POWER...
...WHEN THEIR CHILD COMES TO THIS HOUSE?
WHAT WILL HAPPEN...

...SO THAT THEIR DAUGHTER CAN COME HOME AND BE SAFE...
...I WILL LIVE ON.
A LIGHT SHINED IN HIS EYES.

THAT'S WHY...
I THOUGHT I HAD PROTECTED HER...!
...HE SAID THAT.
IF I CAN'T SAVE HER...
...THERE'S NO REASON FOR ME TO KEEP LIVING!
THOSE WORDS...

BACK THEN...
...THAT'S WHAT HE HAD MEANT...
...IF YOU COULDN'T SAVE ME?
WHAT DID YOU MEAN WHEN YOU SAID THERE'D BE NO REASON FOR YOU TO KEEP LIVING...

UM... DID I SAY THAT?
LIAR.
THIS MAY NOT MAKE UP FOR...
...YOUR DRAWER OF MEMORIES—
NO.
I PREFER THIS.
THESE SPOKEN WORDS...
...ABOUT PEOPLE WHO ARE LONG GONE...
...IS NOW A WARM MEMORY.
...IT MAKES ME HAPPY.
WHEN YOU OR AOI TELL ME THESE THINGS...



...THEIR FEELINGS IN THOSE WORDS HAVE CONNECTED TO ME.

IN THE SAME WAY MY MOTHER'S LAST WORDS...

...BECAME A SOURCE OF HOPE FOR AOI...

LIAR.
...ALL THIS TIME.
YOU'VE BEEN WAITING IN THIS HOUSE FOR ME...
HIMARI
YOU LIAR.
YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME RIGHT AWAY.

Chapter 34/End

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER 35
KRIII
KRIII
KRIII
HELLO, AOI.
BLINK
TUG
EVERYONE IS WAITING.
LET'S GO.
UNGH
I WAS SLEEPING? I'M PRETTY SURE THAT TAMAMO-
A-AH. IT DOESN'T MATTER.
KRII
IT'S ALREADY EVENING.
YOU SLEPT A LONG TIME.
HUH?

Welcome Back, Aoi!

WELCOME BACK, AOI!

LOOK!

CHAPTER 35

Light

LOOK!
CHAPTER
35
Light

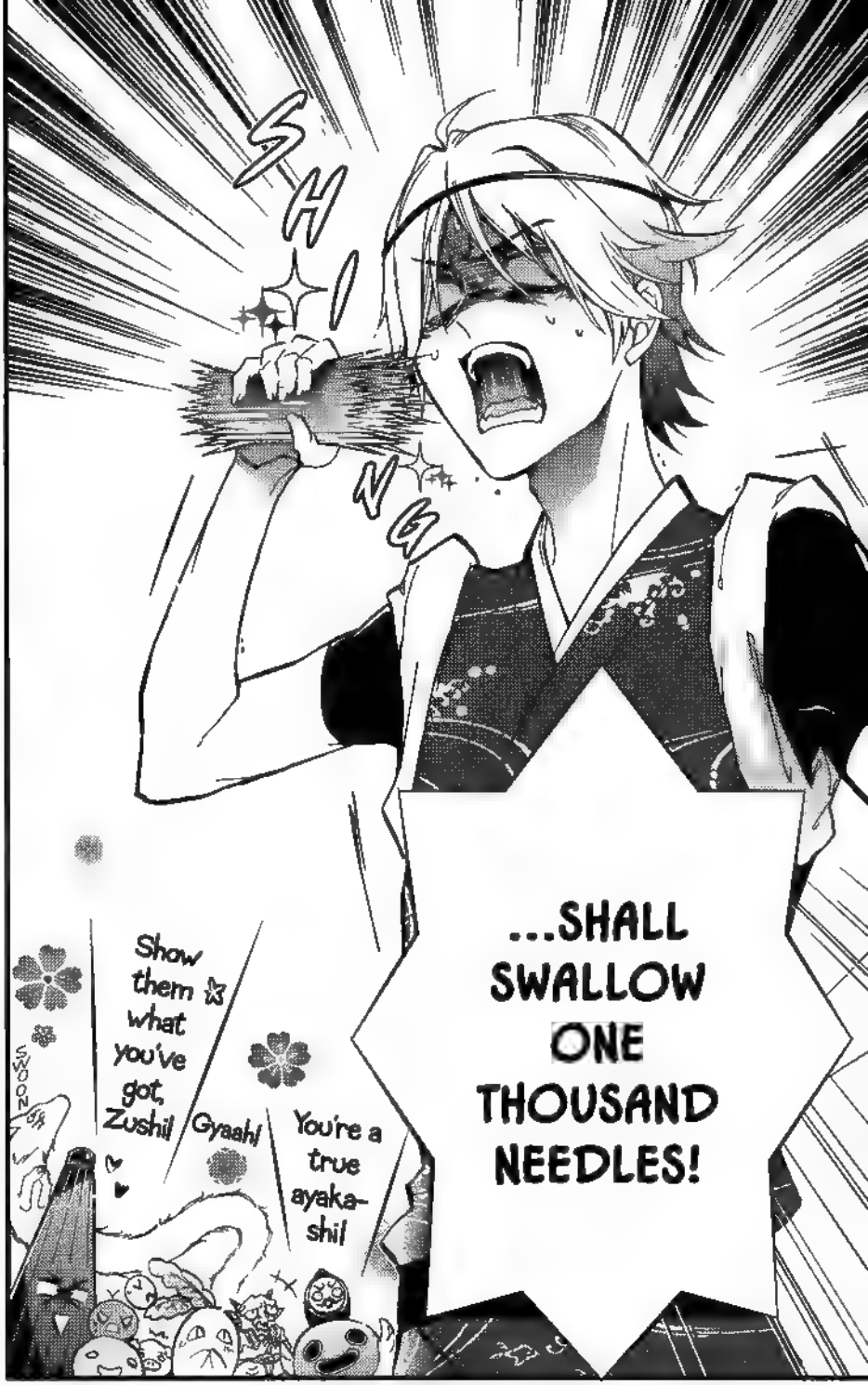
Welcome Back, Aoi!
WELCOME BACK, AOI!

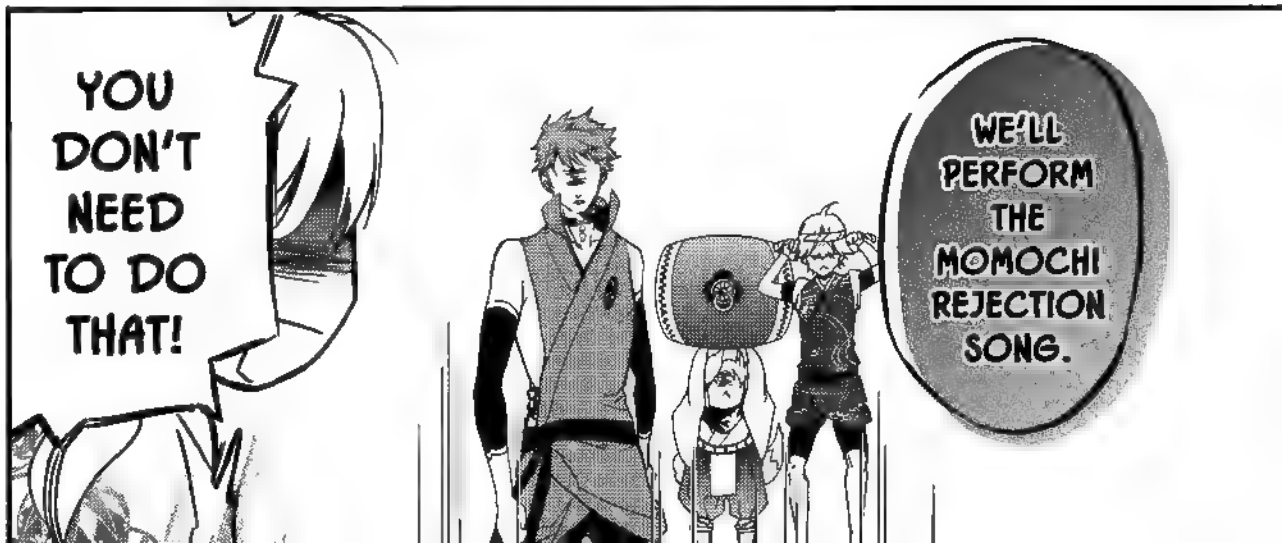
YAY
WE SURPRISED AOI!
WAIT, THERE'S MORE.
SUCCESS!
PLOP
THE GUEST OF HONOR SHOULD HAVE A SEAT.
!
DID YOU DO ALL THIS WHILE I WAS ASLEEP?
I'M SURPRISED.
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU PUT A LOT OF EFFORT INTO COOKING THIS.
THANK YOU...
WAIT!
GLOG GLOG GLOG
...INTO THIS OSHIRUKO FOUNTAIN!
ALL THESE PLATES ARE MEANT TO BE DIPPED...
PLEASE DIG IN!
*Oshiruko is a red-bean soup with pieces of rice cake in it.

CHOMP
CHOMP
THE TUNA IS PRETTY GOOD.
GYOZA? SHRIMP TEMPURA?
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY FIRST?
SORRY. ONCE YUKARI CAME UP WITH THAT IDEA, HE WOULDN'T LET IT GO.
WOW, THAT IS SOMETHING NEW...
AOI!
TH-THIS REMINDS ME OF WHEN WE HAD BLACKOUT HOTPOT...
OPEN WIDE, AOI.
THEREFORE, I, ZUSHI, YOUR SHIKIGAMI...
I AM TRULY SORRY!
DURING THAT INCIDENT WITH THE SUSPICIOUS PRIEST, MY BEHAVIOR WAS SHAMEFUL!

I WAS WONDERING WHY HE WAS BACK IN HUMAN FORM.
HUH? WAIT, YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT!
YUP
Swallowing needles
DON'T DO SOMETHING SO DEPRESSING...

PARTIES ARE ABOUT DANCING!
YEAH!!
OH
COME TO THINK OF IT...
NOW'S THE PERFECT TIME!


SHING
...SHALL SWALLOW ONE THOUSAND NEEDLES!
SWOON
Show them what you've got, Zushi!
Gyaah!
You're a true ayakashi!


YOU DON'T NEED TO DO THAT!
WE'LL PERFORM THE MOMOCHI REJECTION SONG.

IF IT'S DANCING YOU WANT...
...I'LL SHOW YOU MY BON FESTIVAL DANCE SKILLS.
WELL, I'M NOT SO BAD AT DANCING MYSELF.
AHEM
MY TURN!

TA-DAH
NOTHING SAYS SUMMER...
MY SURPRISE IS OVER HERE...
KLAK
FIREWORKS
...LIKE FIRE-WORKS!
WHOA. WHERE DID YOU GET THESE?
I FOUND THEM WHILE SEARCHING THE STORE-ROOM WITH YUKARI.
THEY LOOK PRETTY OLD...
...BUT I DIDN'T GET A BAD FEELING FROM THEM, SO I THINK THEY'RE FINE.
THEY'RE CLEARLY LABELED AS FIRE-WORKS.
OKAY, IGNITE!
FOOSH

SHZZNT
ZZT
ZZT
SHOCK
SAME WITH THIS ONE.
OR THIS ONE.
THIS ONE WON'T LIGHT EITHER.
DID THEY ALL GET DAMP?!
SUFF
NO WAY.
THIS WAS SUP-POSED TO BE THE MAIN EVENT.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, HIMARI.
VHHM
HUH?
AYAKASHI ITEMS...

FOOM
FOOM
FOOM
FOOM
NUE...
...REQUIRE AN AYAKASHI METHOD TO USE THEM.
COME FORTH, FOX FIRE...

FOOM
SISH
SISH
SISH
THEY IGNITED?
WOW!
MAGNIF-ICENT!
SHOOOM
OH...

DRAGONS OF LIGHT...
SHIFF
AOI?!
SO THEY WERE YOKAI FIREWORKS AFTER ALL...
POOM KRAKK

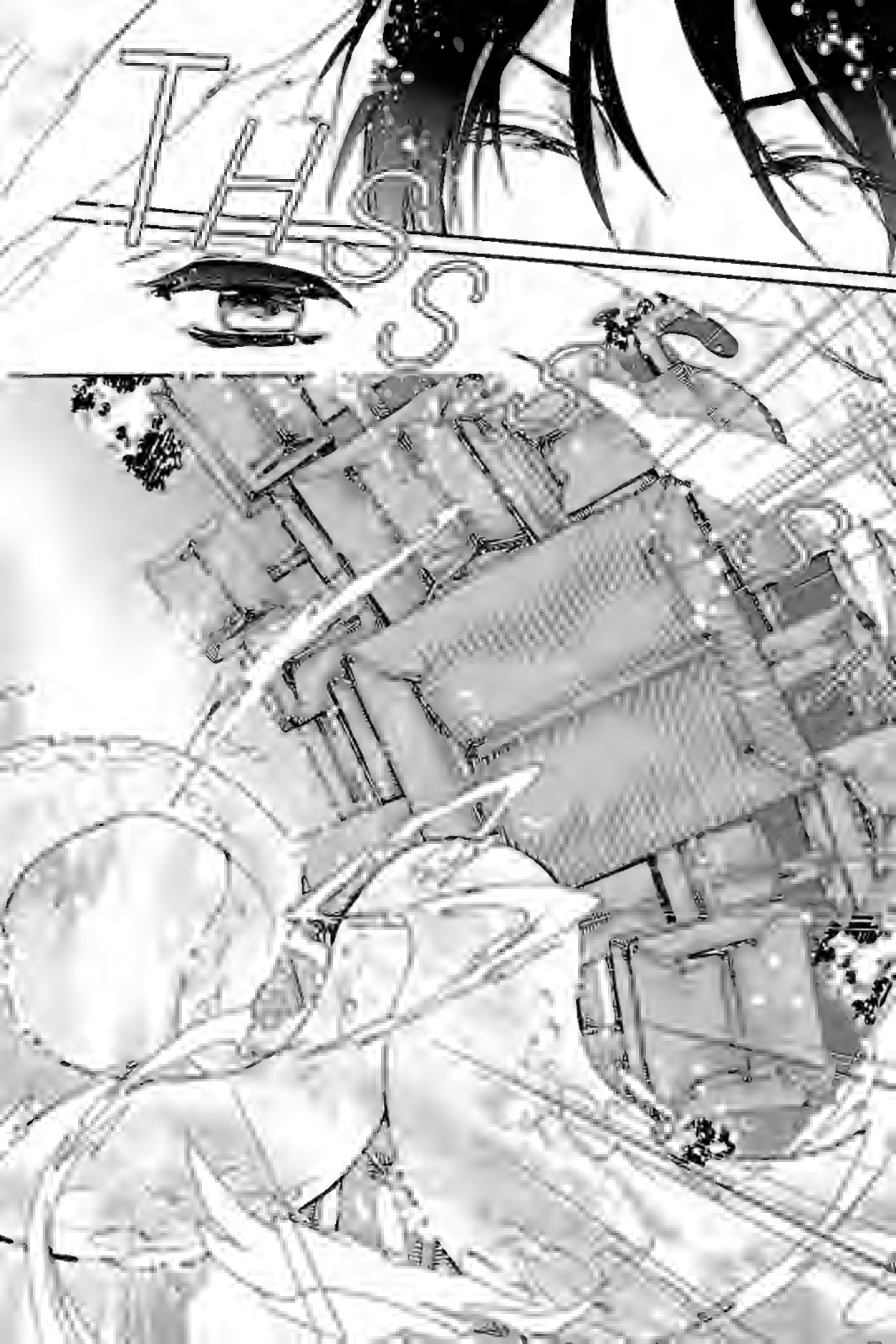
WEREN'T YOU THE NUE JUST NOW?
THE PARTY IS GOING WELL.
EVERYONE IS ENJOYING THEMSELVES.
THANK YOU FOR THE WONDERFUL SURPRISE...
...HIMARI.
POOM
POOM
SWISH
HM?
THE NUE DID ALL THIS, BUT...

WHAT'S THIS?! THEY'RE RIDING THOSE LIGHT DRAGONS?
HUH? YES, THEY'RE AYAKASHI FIREWORKS.
TUG
SNAP
AOI!
WHAT?!
You should have told me sooner!

LET'S GO!

DASH
THE BIGGEST ONE...
...IS OVER THERE.
HUH ?!
ARE YOU-
OH!
IT'S BEEN LIT!
HIMARI, THIS ISN'T REALLY-
AOI!
DASH
LET'S GO.

THSSSS


THE END

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
IT'S BETTER THAN I IMAGINED.
WE'RE FLYING...
LOOK...
I'VE BEEN WANT-ING
...TO SHOW YOU THIS.

THOSE ARE THE LIGHTS...
...OF THE TOWN YOU'RE PROTECT-ING.
POM
FIRE-WORKS?

OH.
THAT'S JUST THE SOUND OF THUNDER IN THE DISTANCE. THERE MAY BE RAIN SOON.
OF COURSE, LONG AGO...
...IT WAS SAID THAT THOSE SOUNDS WERE CAUSED BY AYAKASHI PLAYING WITH FIREWORKS.
AYAKASHI, HUH.
YOU'VE BEEN WORKING HARD AT MOMOCHI HOUSE THIS ENTIRE TIME.
...WE ARE SOME-HOW...
EVEN THOUGH THEY CAN'T SEE US...

...ALL CON-NECTED.
IT'S AMAZING HOW BEAUTIFUL...
...THOSE LIGHTS ARE.
MY FEELINGS WILL BECOME EMOTIONAL BONDS...
...SURE TO REACH YOU.
THANK YOU, AOI.

...THERE'S NO REASON FOR ME TO KEEP LIVING!
I DON'T WANT YOU...
...TO EVER THINK THAT AGAIN.

UP IN THE SKY, HUH?
FSSSSSSSH
POOM
I SUPPOSE...
...HE'S STILL WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF MOMOCHI HOUSE.
POOM
BUT SOMEDAY...
...THAT GIRL MAY BE THE ONE...
...WHO CAN LEAD AOI...
POOM
...BACK INTO THE HUMAN REALM.

ISE, DID YOU KNOW...
...CAN BE READ AS AOI, OR "MALLOW THAT FACES THE SUN"?
...THE KANJI FOR HIMAWARI, OR "SUN-FLOWER"...
I KNEW THAT.
THAT GIRL SAID...
...SHE WANTED TO LIVE HER LIFE LIKE A SUN-FLOWER.
A FLOWER THAT FACES THE SUN WITH AOI...

YOU COULD SAY IT'S FATE.
OH DEAR, HAVE I SAID SOMETHING DREADFULLY HUMAN?
HEH
IT CERTAINLY WAS DREAD-FUL.

HUH?
HIMARI, OR "A LIGHT OF GREAT DISTANCE"...

"MAY YOUR LIGHT EXTEND...
"...OVER GREAT DIS-TANCES..."
IN A DIARY...
...YOUR PARENTS WROTE...
...THE MEANING OF YOUR NAME.

MY TRUE NAME...
THE HI IN YOUR NAME IS THE KANJI FOR "LIGHT."

I SEE.
FROM YUKARI?
I HEARD ABOUT THE DIARY.
YES...

I FINALLY TOLD YOU.

THEIR FEELINGS ARE EMOTIONAL BONDS...
...THAT HAVE REACHED ME.

I'M...
...PROTECTING THE LIGHT...
...YOUR NAME IS BASED ON.

AOI.
...ALL THIS TIME.
...PRO-TECTING ME...
AND YOU'VE BEEN...
AOI.
I WILL DEVOTE MY LIFE TO HER LIGHT.

THANK YOU, HIMARI.
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING.
AHH...
AOI'S EYES...
...ARE SO BEAU-TIFUL.
HIMARI, LISTEN...

...I...

THE TRUTH IS...

THE TRUTH IS...
...I...

...DO
LOVE
YOU...
End

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

Here is volume 9. I'm sorry for making you wait for a bit—I was on maternity leave. I am deeply impressed with myself that I was able to return to work and put out this volume. I went with my unborn child to see the *Momochi House* play in the theater and to meet everyone at the autograph sessions. It was a lot of fun. The arc about Aoi's past has wrapped up in this volume. It was an idea I had since the beginning of the series. My maternity leave and the reunion chapter seemed to line up perfectly. It felt like fate. I definitely sensed something. Anyway, the things I draw and the things I want to draw won't change. *Momochi House* will continue.

Please keep reading.

Aya Shouoto
二〇一六

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

I love picking out summer kimonos,
and I quickly fall in love with them.
But my summers usually end
without even wearing one or two.
I'd like to make it a habit to don
them when I go out.

-Aya Shouoto

Aya Shouoto was born on December 25.
Her hobbies are traveling, staying at hotels,
sewing and daydreaming. She currently
lives in Tokyo and enjoys listening to J-pop
anime theme songs while she works.

The Demon Prince of Momochi House

Volume 9
Shojo Beat Edition

Story and Art by Aya Shouoto

Translation JN Productions
Touch-Up Art & Lettering Inori Fukuda Trant
Design Izumi Evers
Editor Nancy Thistlethwaite

MOMOCHISANCHI NO AYAKASHI OUJI Volume 9
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First published in Japan in 2016 by KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.
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Printed in the U.S.A.

Published by VIZ Media, LLC
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
First printing, July 2017

VIZ media
www.viz.com

RATED T FOR TEEN
PARENTAL ADVISORY
THE DEMON PRINCE OF MOMOCHI HOUSE is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up.
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